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By SCOTT MacLEOD
LONDON

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher will make a written statement to Parliament in the next few days on reports that a British linguist supplied key U.S. data to the Soviets, government officials said today.

The latest spy scandal to rock British intelligence coincided with the disclosure of a major intelligence coup -- the defection to Britain of the KGB's agent in Tehran.

Official sources said Sunday that British MI6 intelligence agents were questioning Soviet defector Vladimir Kuzichkin, 35, at a ''safe house'' in Sussex, England.

But opposition leaders called on Mrs. Thatcher to make a full explanation to on reports of a massive security leak at the ultra-secret Cheltenham communications center by Geoffrey Artur Prime, a Russian translator arrested in July on espionage charges.

Government officials said Mrs. Thatcher would provide a written statement to Parliament within the next few days.

Cheltenham, the main source of intelligence information about the Soviet Union, is operated by the U.S. National Security Agency and Britain's Government Communication Headquarters together with Canada and Australia.

Although his case has not yet been tried, The New York Times quoted U.S. intelligence officials Sunday as saying Prime conducted one of the potentially most damaging Soviet penetrations of Western intelligence since World War II.

Prime provided Moscow with highly sensitive information on the West's attempts to intercept Soviet communications and break the Kremlin's code, the newspaper said. He spied from 1968 to 1977, it said.

The New York Times said Prime had access to highly classified raw intelligence material flowing in from U.S.-operated satellite and ground stations. The State Department and CIA declined to comment on the report.

A former employe at the center, Alex Lawrie, who retired last December after working there for 22 years, said in an interview with the Guardian newspaper ''security there is just about good enough to fend off a well-meaning drunk.''

He said he often warned the government of weak security at Cheltenham.

''I always had the impression that the Russians knew a great deal more about Government Communications Headquarters than I did. It's such a huge place. It's inconceivable that the information would not get out. Infiltration seems to be par for the course,'' Lawrie said.

Chapman Pincher, an intelligence specialist for the Daily Express, wrote ''Britain's security services will shortly be rocked by a major new spy scandal.''

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